Delegation of Powers to states under forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

202. SHRI AHMED MOHAMED BHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some State Governments have been representing to the Central Government to delegate them the powers under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;

(b) if so, what decision has been taken on these representations;

(c) whether Sarkaria Commisson had also made some recommendations in this respect;

(d) whether State Government of Gujarat has also urged the Central Government to delegate the powers under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 to avoid porocedural delays; and

(e) if so, whether any final decision in this regard has been taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) After discussing the issue in various fora including the State Forest Minister's Conference held during February, 1992, it was decided to further decentralise and streamline examination of proposals under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Accordingly, Forest (Conservation) Rules, 1981 have been suitably amended on 21.5.1992 and revised consolidated guidelines for examination of proposals under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 have been issued on 25.10.1992. Revised consolidated guidelines *inter alia* include delegation of powers to Regional Chief Conservator of Forests to finally decide proposals involving diversion of forest land upto 5 ha. excluding proposals in respect of regularisation of encroachments and mining and initial examination of all proposals involving diversion of forest land upto 20 ha.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

Effect of pollution on school going children in Delhi

203. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report published in the Economic Times of 4th February, 1994 under the caption, 'Pollution driving Delhi's kids to inhalers';

(b) whether it is a fact that school going children in Delhi are vulnerable victims of pollution and most of them are suffering from bronchial asthma and other respiratory problems;

(c) if the answers to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative, what are the details in this regard; and

(d) what steps Gvoernment have taken to check the air and water pollution in the country and particularly in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Children who travel to school by roads with heavy vehicular traffic are vulnerable to pollution. There are no statistical data available with the Government to say that most of the children are suffering from bronchial asthma and other respiratory problems.

(d) The steps taken to check the air and water pollution in the country and particularly in Delhi include the following;

(i) Standards for discharge of effluents and emissions from major categories of polluting industries have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.